

Information provided by the Norwegian authorities on 27/03/2020

The Norwegian Coastal Administration

The Norwegian Coastal Administration (NCA) is responsible for services related to maritime safety (including VTS, pilot services, AIS, SafeSeaNet Maritime SingleWindow), maritime infrastructure, transport planning and efficiency, and emergency response to acute pollution. Relevant information on the current situation, including for vessel subject to compulsory pilotage, is published and kept up to date on the NCA homepage in accordance with the developing situation. This information is available in Norwegian and English: <https://www.kystverket.no/en/News/the-coronavirus-and-seagoing-traffic/>

The NCA has put in place the following reporting and information measures to assist the situation:

- As a partial reporting of the Maritime Declaration of Health, all vessels are required to confirm through SafeSeaNet Norway that there is no detection or suspected infection on-board.
- Ports can now use SafeSeaNet Norway to inform vessels prior to arrival of relevant measures in place and the status of port operations.
- Specific functionality based on NCA reporting and information systems has been developed to collect data and analyse the effects of the COVID-19 measures on sea traffic.

The NCA Pilot Services has put in place a number of specific measures with regards to mandatory pilotage, including:

- All vessels which are confirmed or suspected of infection are considered on a case by case basis and the conduct of pilotage follows established procedures. The procedure is established in cooperation with local health authorities, and may include (but is not limited to):
 - pilotage being carried out by pilot not on-board, but in a pilot vessel closely following the vessel (remote pilotage)
 - vessel to be anchored until infection status is clarified. Medical assistance brought to vessel at anchor.
 - If a) or b) is not possible NCA Pilot Services will on case by case basis in close cooperating with health authorities consider to embark the vessel and if necessary the pilot can sail to safe berth.
- All vessels subject to pilotage are notified through email that additional sanitary measures must be implemented to protect the pilot (wipe down the wheelhouse with a bleach/water solution, no food or beverages for the pilot, no physical contact with the pilot and to keep safe distance from the pilot while onboard).
- A contingency plan has been made to prioritize vessel traffic in case of shortage of pilots. Currently there is no shortage.
- Contingency planning is ongoing to ensure operational pilotage services, including the establishment of dedicated crisis management staff.
- Specific travel instructions have been issued with a view to reduce risk to pilots during travel to and from assignments. All personnel within the Pilot Service are informed (kept updated) and following the general advice^[1] given by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health.
- Travelling of the pilots is kept to a minimum, they follow the Norwegian Institute of Public Healths advice of social contact and they avoid close contact with others.

^[1] <https://www.fhi.no/en/id/infectious-diseases/coronavirus/>

- A precautionary principle has been established and procedures are in place. The NCA Pilot Service has established procedures for handling personnel which has been in possible contact with others infected by the COVID-19.
- The NCA Pilot Service operations and actions towards COVID-19 is outlined in the FAQ section at the NCA webpage^[2]
- Pilot stations are subject to additional sanitary/cleaning measures.
- Validity of health certificates for pilots and pilot certificates expiring before 31.12.2020 have been temporarily prolonged for 6 months to alleviate administrative burdens and the burden on doctors.

The Norwegian Maritime Authority

Link to website with updated guidelines: <https://www.sdir.no/en/news/corona/>

The Norwegian government has taken drastic action to prevent the coronavirus from spreading. These actions affect shipping to a great extent. Ships must be able to sail in order to ensure export and import of necessary goods and medicines. An important precondition to make the ships able to sail is that crew changes are carried out while the infection control measures are being observed.

In the event of an infection on board or crew members working hours beyond provisions on regular working hours and rest, the ship may have to remain stationary and crew members may be dismissed.

There are new additions to the general travel restrictions on work journeys to maintain infrastructural operations.

- Work journeys maintaining a fundamental need for transport in society, e.g. shipping and other cargo transport may be carried out as smoothly as possible.
- Work journeys to maintain the production of oil and gas on the Norwegian continental shelf may be carried out as smoothly as possible.
- Port calls for ships carrying goods and supplies must be ensured.

The NMA wants to stress that it is extremely important to find immediate solutions to ensure a safe change of crew at Norwegian ports.

It is important that the crew on board are particularly vigilant with regard to infection control measures, especially by focusing on good hygiene routines.

The NMA suggests the following options:

Crew members signing off in Norway

- Crew members and other persons on board who have not had any contact with persons outside the ship, who are signing off in Norway after at least 14 days on board and who do not have any symptoms, may be regarded as not infected and do not need to be put in quarantine.

^[2] <https://www.kystverket.no/en/News/the-coronavirus-and-seagoing-traffic/>

- Agents/companies shall in other cases, pending a return, make sure that local quarantine locations are established for crew not residing in Norway.
- When transport has been confirmed and it is time to return, the company will use established routines to get the relevant crew out of Norway.

Crew signing on in Norway

In order to keep ships sailing, there must be good routines to get the crew into Norway and on board the vessels.

The company must plan well and carry out good risk assessments to get the crew on board without being infected.

Vessels engaged on domestic voyages

Crew members having symptoms or suspecting they are infected must follow regular quarantine or isolation routines established by Norwegian authorities.

The situation is developing fast, and there could be changes due to the guidelines from superior authorities.

The employers' organisations and labour organisations endorse this document.

Regarding extension of statutory supervision and issuance/endorsement of statutory certificates due to COVID-19

1 – Scope

This note shall apply to all Norwegian flagged vessels registered in the Norwegian Ordinary Ship Register (NOR) or the Norwegian International Ship Register (NIS), as well as all fishing vessels and cargo ships of 8 to 15 meters having vessel instructions.

2 – Background

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease in 2019 (COVID-19), the Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has received inquiries from shipowners and Recognized Organizations (RO) regarding the postponement of supervision and extending the validity of mandatory ship certificates. This includes an extension of statutory certificates or postponement of bottom inspections as a result of unavailable dry-dock facilities.

Travelling, both nationally and internationally, has become increasingly difficult as travel bans have been imposed. Combined travel restrictions given by governments and companies cause difficulties with providing inspectors when needed. Furthermore, several shipyards cannot accommodate vessels. This applies to both booked and planned supervision requiring dry-dock.

Based on the above conditions, the NMA considers the COVID-19 outbreak to be a *force majeure* situation.

For the NMA, the main focus is that ships registered in NOR or NIS to the greatest extent possible shall not be out of operation due to any expired certificates caused by the current COVID-19 situation.

3– Extension of certificates

The shipowner is responsible to ensure that all vessels are kept in prescriptive condition. The Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has decided that certificates and vessel instructions expiring before 12 June 2020 may be granted a 3-month extension without further application or approval from the NMA.

See following [link](#) for further details.

Inspections:

Measures taken with regards to PSC, flagstate etc.

PSC activities will be strongly reduced until further notice. Based on this port state control in Norway will only be carried out when necessary for safety reasons.

Flagstate control activities are reduced. Flagstate inspections will only be carried out when necessary for safety reasons.

Remote ISM audits

Due to the coronavirus crisis, the Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has laid down guidelines for carrying out remote ISM audits as well as interim SMC/DOC audits.

On 24 March this year, the NMA decided that annual, periodical and renewal audits according to the ISM Code, as well as verifications of interim SMC and DOC audits may be carried out as remote audits using digital means. This will apply until further notice.

See following [link](#) for further details.